

"Dad, I want to build a fort in the tree on the patio," said Jacob. He was talking to the right person because Jacob's father was a carpenter by trade and was well known around the city for the quality of his work. "Jacob," he replied, "I don't know how we can build a fort out there because there is not much room."

Jacob had to agree with his father. They lived in the middle of the city in an apartment on the twelfth floor of the building, and all they had for outside space was a small patio with a seven-foot oak tree that Mom had transplanted. "Still, Dad, I think if we put our two genius minds together, we can come up with a plan that would work," said Jacob. His father laughed at his son's flattery and agreed to begin working on the blueprints for a tree fort as soon as he finished another job.

Later that week, Dad brought home nails, a saw, and several sheets of sturdy plywood. He showed his blueprints to Jacob and they began to work. Dad showed Jacob the tricks of the trade, and soon Jacob was cutting the pieces of wood like a master craftsman. Soon it was time to assemble the fort, and Dad and Jacob nailed the wood in place around the tree. The fort was four feet wide, five feet high, and three feet above the ground. "I just hope the tree is sturdy enough to hold you and your friends," said Dad.

Then Jacob decided that the fort needed to be painted brown and green. "That way it will be camouflaged from any girls who might want to get in. LaToya asked me whether she could bring over her friends, but I said no girls are allowed in here," said Jacob to his father. "That's fine because it is your tree fort, you helped build it, and you can

make the rules. I will try to build something else for your sister and her friends," said Dad.

The next two days were spent painting the tree fort and moving important things into it like comic books and food. Jacob was thrilled with their accomplishment. "Thank you so much for helping me build this, Dad. I will never forget it. I'm going to sleep in the fort every single night!" said Jacob. "That sounds like fun, but be sure to come in when it snows," joked Dad.

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